

REPORT

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OF THE

WELLAND CANAL,

report

FOR

1829.

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PRINTED BY WILLIAM L. MACKENZIE.

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REPORT.

It was found, in the early part of the last season, that misrepresentations respecting the Welland Canal were so industriously circulated, and so many strange and discouraging rumours concerning it were afloat, that the Directors thought it right to publish a supplementary report, describing minutely the condition in which the work then was, and the measures which they had determined to pursue.

To this report, made in June last, they now refer for particulars, which it is unnecessary to recapitulate here. Those who feel such an interest in the undertaking as leads them to desire an accurate description of it, will find that report sufficient for their purpose.

It is highly gratifying to the Directors, in presenting this report at the conclusion of the present season, to be able to announce that a practicable navigation has been at length accomplished, from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie, by the route of the Niagara and Welland rivers.

The public have been for some time in possession of this cheering intelligence ; and it is difficult to conceive any event that could promise to add more to the prosperity of Upper Canada. It is not the intention of the Directors on this occasion to recapitulate the embarrassing difficulties which they have had to encounter during the past year: they have been of that nature, that if the object of their exertions had been one that affected only their own private interests, they could scarcely have hesitated to abandon it altogether ; and it is but just to add, that so perplexing were those difficulties, that the work must have been suspended if it had not been for the confidence manifested by the contractors. By their indefatigable exertions, under great disadvantages, the canal was filled in the middle of November last, with water brought down from the Grand River, through the new feeder ; and on the 30th of the same month, the anniversary of the day on which the canal was commenced five years ago, the inhabitants of the district of Niagara were gratified by witnessing the ascent of two schooners from Lake Ontario to the river Welland.

These vessels proceeded to Chippewa and Fort Erie, and to the opposite harbours of Black Rock and Buffalo, in the State of New York, where their arrival excited no little surprise, and was welcomed in the most friendly manner.

The difficulties alluded to, together with the illness of the agent and principal engineer, at a period when thier active superintendence was most important, unfortunately delayed the completion of the work to a season much later than had been looked forward to.

The Directors, feeling the importance of opening the canal this autumn, had intended to celebrate the event in a manner worthy of the occasion ; but it had become so late in the year, that it appeared inexpedient to incur the hazard of calling a number of persons together from a distance, to witness a ceremony which a single severe night might render almost impossible ; they, however, gave directions for obtaining one or two schooners, and, passing them through the canal, if the season would admit of it. This has been accomplished, as we have above stated : the schooners have both returned, and the weather has continued so open, that even to this time the canal might have been navigated.

The experiment thus made, in the presence of many respectable persons, has proved, that the locks are perfectly well constructed, and may be passed in a much shorter time than the most sanguine persons had anticipated.

Another important and remarkable feature in this canal is, the expanded surface it presents along a great portion of its course, from its numerous reservoirs, and the peculiar make of the country through which it passes, enabling a large vessel to glide through this navigation with nearly the same facility that a boat does in a canal confined within its artificial channel. These facts, which were evident to all who saw the passage of the schooners *Ann & Jane*, and *R. H. Boughton*, have given a confidence in the work, which its warmest friends could scarcely have ventured to expect at so early a stage.

The channel which has thus been opened to commerce, and of which, we doubt not, the inhabitants of both sides of the upper lakes will avail themselves, does not, by any means, offer all the advantages which the completion of the entire design will produce. It places the final accomplishment of this great work, however, beyond question ; because, it is now carried to a point at which its benefits will be felt : all doubt is removed, and all real difficulty is surmounted. What remains is easy of execution—the expense can be estimated with comparative certainty ; and no rational person can, for a moment, hesitate in declaring, that the work cannot, and must not stop short of the original design.

It may be thus described in a few words : vessels drawing $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet water, and not having more than $21\frac{1}{2}$ feet breadth of beam, coming from any port on Lake Erie with produce, will sail down the river Niagara, until they approach within about a fourth of a mile from the mouth of the river Welland or Chippewa. There

they will enter a canal, which has been cut across a point of land into the river Welland, in order to avoid the difficulty and danger of descending the river Niagara so low as to the mouth of the Welland.

This cut is 15 chains in length: they will then pass up the river Welland, a distance of $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles: the river is deep and still, and affords an admirable navigation for vessels of any burden. A tow-path will be formed on its western bank, which is now in great forwardness. From the Welland they will ascend by two locks into the Deep Cut, from which point, to Lake Ontario, the distance is $16\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Along this portion of the line, the canal is filled with water brought down the feeder from the Grand River, and conducted across the Welland in an aqueduct. Thirty four locks occur in this distance; and it has been found in the first experiment made of them, that they may be passed in an average time of seven minutes. It will thus be seen that the whole distance of artificial navigation, between the two lakes, is sixteen and an half miles; and that, including the passage of the Niagara and Welland rivers, vessels will be towed 42 miles, which can be done in a day without difficulty; at least, that is the conviction resulting from the experiment made.

The Directors are desirous of giving to the public all the information that can be of use in enabling them to avail themselves, promptly, of the advantages which this canal will afford; and they, therefore, communicate a schedule of the rates of toll which they propose for the ensuing year, viz:

Flour———4d. per bbl.

Pork ———6d. do.

Ashes ———1s. do.

Pipe Staves, 20s. per M.

This information will enable merchants living in Ohio and other parts of the United States to make their calculations, and determine whether it will be their interest to send through this channel such of their produce as may be destined for New York. As to produce of every kind intended to be sent to Montreal, there can be no doubt that it will pass through the Welland Canal.

Foreign vessels using the canal and not breaking bulk will meet with neither detention nor charge; but will pass through this artificial channel in the same manner as they have always done through the waters of the Lakes and Rivers within our boundaries. If they desire to break bulk they must of course enter regularly in the same manner as at any other port.

It may seem to some of the Stockholders, that the tolls are much too low, when compared with those exacted in other places in this province and in Lower Canada. The experience

of a year will best determine this point; but in the mean time, the Directors beg to state, that they have been governed by this consideration:—Certain expenses must be incurred in the payment of wages to lock-tenders and others, which will not be increased by any additional quantity of produce or merchandize passing through; it is therefore deemed prudent to proceed upon a system as liberal as possible, in order to attract a great trade which a contrary policy might exclude.

When we consider the immense extent of territory bordering on the great Lakes above us, and how rapidly their population increases, and must continue to increase, it is difficult to set bounds to the expectations which may be fairly entertained; in the state of Ohio the population is estimated at about a million; the land is exceedingly productive; the people are industrious and enterprising, and have watched the progress of the Welland Canal with no little anxiety as opening to them the advantage of a choice of markets.

Our countrymen in the Upper Districts, will see at once how valuable an object has been attained for them, from the following statement:—

The price of conveying a barrel of Flour from the Township of Waterloo, or the Grand River, and shipping the same on Lake Ontario, is at present from 3s 1½d. to 3s 9d.

The price of conveying a barrel from thence to the mouth of Grand River, as furnished by Mr. Shade, an active Merchant resident in Dumfries, will be 7½d.; from the Grand River to Ontario 7½d.; which gives a saving on each Barrel, of from 1s 7½d. to 2s 6d. From any part of the Grand River below this it will bear the same proportion.

From Dover, or the interior of the Long Point country, the saving will be equally great. Vessels will convey produce from any part of Lake Erie to Prescott for less than the price heretofore charged for the two Lake Freights. As it is a mere continuation of voyage, the grower will consequently save the charge heretofore made for storage at Fort Erie, Chippewa and Queenston, together with the boating and land carriage between those places, which hitherto caused their property to be removed six times; whereas, by this conveyance it will not require one transhipment.

The Company are now indebted,	
To Labourers, Contractors, &c.	£10,115 17 11
In addition to which, they have demands a-	} 5,352 1 6
gainst them for lands, damages, &c.	
Making in all, " " "	£15,467 18 5

'They have on hand, 1,697 shares of stock,	}	21,365 9 11
which persons had pledged themselves to		
take, amounting to £ 21,212 10 0		
Balance in hands of agents, 152 19 11		

Which would have left this amount on hand,	}	£5,397 11 6
had the above shares been paid up,		

The Directors exhibit the above statement, to shew, in justice to themselves, that their being in arrears at this time is not to be ascribed to any imprudent precipitation on their part, as they had, in two instances, entered into engagements for the supply of £21,000, on the faith of which, contracts were entered into, and which, had they been fulfilled, would have left a surplus on hand greater than the temporary deficit which the Directors have been struggling to supply.

To shew the Government, and the Stockholders, that their money has been economically expended, the following statement is presented :

Amount expended on the work by the Engineer's estimate,	}	£243,000
Awards and real estate,		
Duties and interest to the Province and Bank of Upper Canada,	}	8,853
Due from Thos. Proctor, late agent, New York,		
		8,804
		3,428
		<u>£260,085</u>

CONTINGENCIES.

Including Salaries, Engineers' expences, Directors, Agents, &c. &c.	}	£12,710

Which is not quite equal to 5 per cent. on the amount. Few, if any, similar undertakings have been conducted at a less charge than 10 per cent.

It has been found necessary to widen the feeder to 20 feet bottom, and 36 feet surface, from the Deep Cut to the Grand River, in order to insure an ample supply of water for hydraulic and other purposes, as well as to connect the Grand River by a boat canal of suitable dimensions; to accomplish this, as well as to place the ship canal, by the Niagara River, in a perfect state for navigation by the opening of the spring, it will require the sum of £14,530. This part of the work is already under contract; and it is the intention of the Board to make immediate application to the Legislature for an extension of capital; and either to take stock for the public, or loan the company £25,000, to enable them to fulfil their engagements, and complete this work on the above dimensions.

The directors feel assured the Public will not derive the full advantages of this Navigation, until the interior route is open throughout for ship Navigation, according to the original design; to accomplish this a further sum of £25,000 will be required, to obtain which an early application will be made to the Legislature of Lower Canada, to take stock to the amount of £12,500. They are not only equally interested in the complete success of the Canal, but have already manifested their good feeling by taking Stock to the amount of £25,000.

For what remains, an application will be made to the British Government; for which purpose, as well as to arrange other interests of the Company, J. B. Yates, Esq. of New York, purposes to go to England to give correct information on the present state of the work.

To Mr. Yates belongs the credit of being the largest individual Stockholder in the Welland Canal; and from his well known character, the Directors entertain every hope of his success.

The entire cost of this work when completed, viz: the ship Canal now finished between Lake Ontario and the River Welland, including 346 feet of Lockage, the towing paths on the Niagara and Welland rivers, the Cut at the mouth of the Welland, and the Boat Navigation, from the Grand River to the Welland, 27 miles in extent, which will be completed the ensuing spring, will amount to £288,098.

It will be the largest canal in America, and in point of expence will bear the following comparison, with similar undertakings.

The Erie Canal has a depth of 4 feet water, it cost after ascending the Mountain at Lockport to Buffalo on Lake Erie, a distance of thirty-two miles, the sum of \$2,400,000 or £600,000, exclusive of Lockage.

The Lachine Canal with a depth of 5 feet water, nine miles in length, with 44 feet Lockage, cost £120,000.

The first had a length of 3 miles deep rock excavation, and the other is finished, on a much superior scale; still, when the Deep Cut on the Welland Canal, and all other difficulties this work has had to struggle against, are taken into consideration, it will bear a fair comparison with any similar undertaking.

JOHN HENRY DUNN, PRESIDENT.

HENRY J. BOULTON, VICE PRESIDENT.

WILLIAM ALLAN, GEORGE KEEFER, JOHN J. LEFFERTY, ROBERT DICKSON,	}	DIRECTORS:
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Welland Canal Office, St. Catharines, Dec. 31. 1829.